

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

ASILOMAR STATE BEACH AND CONFERENCE GROUNDS

GENERAL PLAN/DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is preparing a General Plan/ Draft Environmental Impact Report for Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds. Although a general plan dated March 1983 exists, a new plan is being developed to meet the current needs of the public. The Department of Parks and Recreation is the lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and pursuant to Section 15082 (CCR) of the State EIR guidelines and has prepared this Notice of Preparation. A previous Notice of Preparation for a General Plan amendment was issued on May 24, 1993 and a public scoping meeting was held on March 22nd 2001.

Your agency's comments are requested in connection with the scope and content of the environmental information germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering a permit or other approval for the project.

The project location, description, possible environmental impacts, and map are attached.

Your response must be sent to the address below not later than thirty (30) days after the receipt of this notice. We would appreciate the name of a contact person in your agency. If you have any questions, please call or write to:

Terry Lee, ASLA
Central Service Center
Department of Parks and Recreation
21 Lower Ragsdale Drive
Monterey, CA. 93940
(831) 657-6349

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The California Department of Parks and Recreation is the Lead Agency under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act and is considering the preparation of a program level (first tier) environmental document for the project identified below.

PROJECT TITLE:

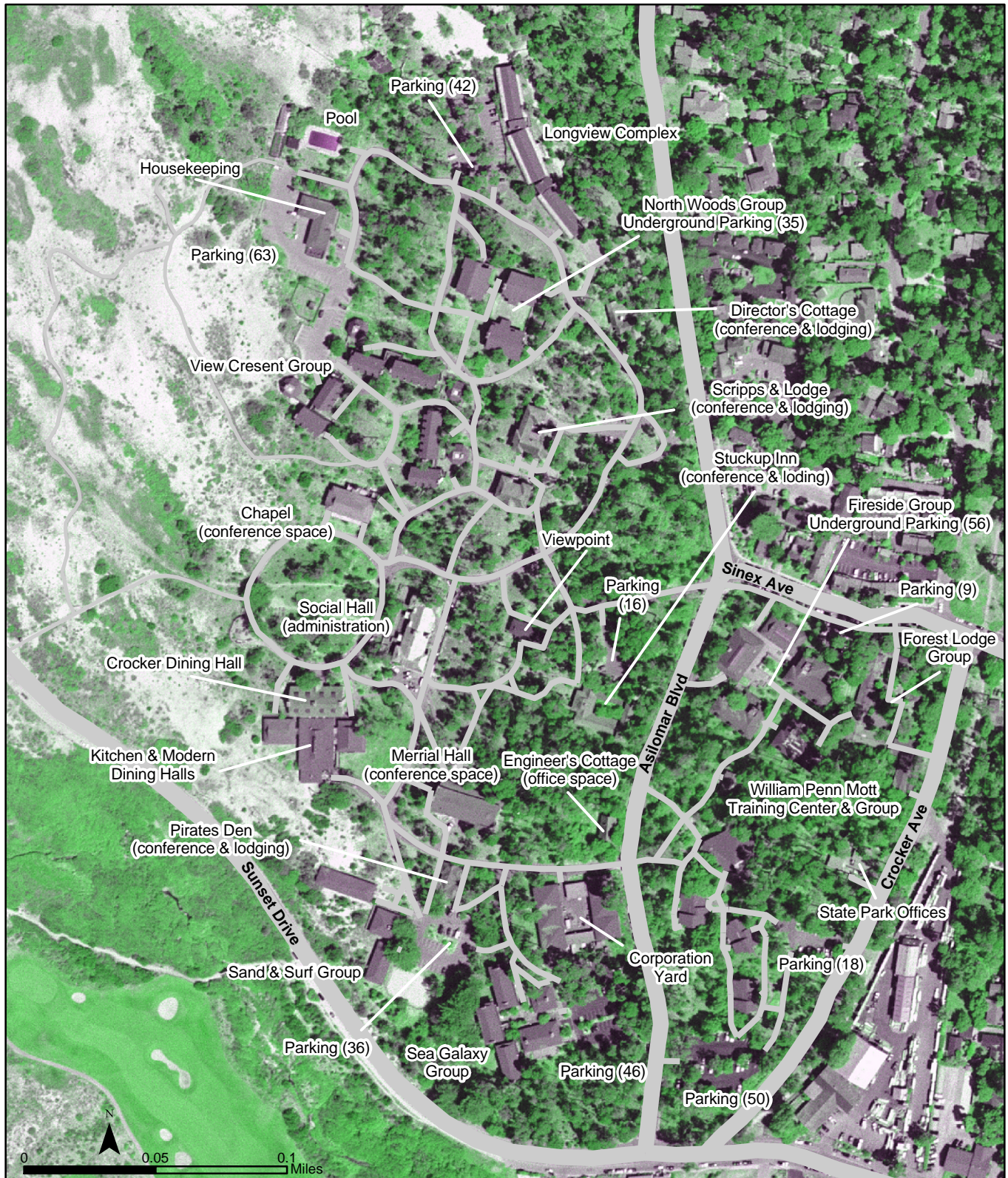
Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds
General Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Report

PROJECT LOCATION:

Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds is located on the western extremity of the Monterey Peninsula within the City of Pacific Grove (see Figure 1). The State Beach fronts about one mile of open shoreline and occupies 108 acres of scenic forest and sand dunes. Approximately 65 of the unit's acres are undergoing dune restoration to reestablish the natural biotic community. Fences, boardwalks and trails have been established in the dunes along the shoreline to protect the restored plant communities, reduce erosion and trampling and to provide public access.

The Asilomar Conference Grounds is an internationally renowned and historically important conference center known for its beauty and the tranquility of its setting. The center is a complex of meeting halls, dining facilities, and guest rooms situated on approximately 60 acres.

Scenic Coast State Highway 1 provides year-round road access to the Monterey Peninsula from the north and south. State Highways 68 and 152 connect to the coast route from the major arterials of State Route 101 and Interstate 5 inland. The City of San Francisco is 185 miles to the north, while Los Angeles is 390 miles to the south. From Highway 1, Asilomar is accessed either via State Route 68 to Asilomar Avenue, or by Ocean View Boulevard west and south along the coast from Cannery Row in Monterey. Air connections to major metropolitan areas are available from nearby Monterey Peninsula Airport.



SOURCE: California Department of Parks and Recreation, 2003;
Environmental Science Associates, 2003.

Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds Draft GP/EIR / 202319 ■

Figure 1
Existing Facilities

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The General Plan will provide a long-term outline and guidelines for future proposed facilities, land use, resource policies, management, operation, interpretation, and concession operations at Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds. Specific development proposals or management plans are not part of the General Plan. This Draft General Plan includes an environmental analysis as the first tier of a tiered environmental impact report. Future implementation of General Plan proposals could occur in phases as funding becomes available, and these proposals will be subject to additional (tiered) environmental review as appropriate.

The General Plan will be based upon the park's classification, Declaration of Purpose, and Vision, which will provide a context and direction for future park management and site specific planning and development. The plan will consider project alternatives and will recommend further studies for future actions.

The General Plan will develop park-wide goals and guidelines and could also call for the preparation of management plans covering subjects such as historic resources, parking, transportation, and access, natural resources, park recreation, interpretation, trails, regional influences, and carrying capacity.

The following are some of the primary planning issues anticipated in this process:

Transportation, circulation, and parking. Opportunities exist to reduce traffic impacts on park values and adjacent neighborhoods through redesign and relocation of park structures, entrances, trails, circulation, and parking.

Park interpretive and educational resources, programs, and facilities. Opportunities exist to enhance the park's interpretive and educational programs and facilities, particularly related to historic resources, and the history of the conference center.

Regional influences and parks relationship with surrounding areas. Opportunities exist for enhancing and providing additional beach access to accommodate the increasing public use.

Growing demand for recreational opportunities and visitor experiences. The State and the Monterey Bay Area region continue to see a growing demand for recreational opportunities. The plan will address opportunities for appropriate visitor facilities, that may require the removal and relocation of existing facilities and structures while maintaining the existing building to open space ratio. The plan will address the need to continue and maintain the visitor experience while maintaining the stewardship of the unit's cultural, ecological, and biological resources.

Visitor use impacts on resources. The General Plan will evaluate the impacts of actions identified in the plan and visitor use on resources, including the historic nature of the conference center and natural resources of the beach.

POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

If the guidelines and proposals made by the General Plan were implemented, there could be potential adverse impacts to soils; water resources and quality; vegetation, wildlife, and wildlife habitat; cultural resources; aesthetics resources; and traffic circulation. Potential redevelopment of facilities could affect air quality, noise, and hazards and hazardous materials. If the guidelines and proposals made by the General Plan were implemented, there could be potential adverse cumulative impacts.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION CONTACT PERSON:

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